

Serial No. 10/637,439

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the above-identified application in view of the present amendment is respectfully requested. By the present amendment, claims 1, 4, 5, and 6 are amended, claims 2-3 are canceled, and claim 7-11 are added.

Claim 4 is amended to recite that said tear seam closes said outflow. The language related to the seam having at least one opening has been removed. Thus, the rejection of claim 4 under 35 U.S.C. 112 should be withdrawn.

Claims 1 and 5 are amended to recite that the pouch (18) has an elongated, tubular shape with opposite first and second end faces (20, 22). The first end face (20) is constructed as an inflation opening. The second end face (22) is constructed as an outflow opening and is provided with a tear seam (24) which tears open at a predetermined internal pressure of said pouch (18) and thereby opens said outflow opening.

Neither DE 20105734, Masuda et al., Keshavaraji nor any other prior art reference taken either alone or in combination discloses or suggests this feature and including all of the features claimed in claims 1 or 5.

Both DE 20105734 and Keshavaraji fail to disclose that the pouch includes a second end that is provided with a tear seam which tears open at a predetermined internal pressure of the pouch and thereby opens said outflow opening. Also, this feature is similar to that recited in claim 3, which was not rejected by DE 20105734 or Keshavaraji.

Masuda et al. fails to disclose a second end face (22) that is constructed as an outflow opening and is provided with

Serial No. 10/637,439

a tear seam (24) which tears open at a predetermined internal pressure of said pouch (18) and thereby opens said outflow opening. By contrast, Masuda et al. simply discloses a stitch 42 on the cylindrical member that closes the passage located downstream from opening 41. Masuda et al. does not have a second end face that is constructed as an outflow opening and is provided with the stitch 42.

Therefore, in view of the above-mentioned reasons, claims 1 and 5 are allowable. Claims 4, 7, and 10 depend from claim 1 and are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein. Claims 6, 8, and 9 depend from claim 5 and are therefore allowable as depending from an allowable claim and for the specific features recited therein.

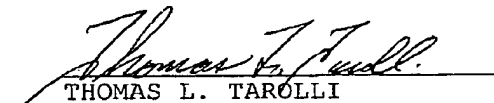
Newly added claim 11 recites a side gas bag for a vehicle occupant restraint system. The side gas bag has an inflatable volume which is delimited by an exterior gas bag covering. The side gas bag is provided with an inflatable pouch in an inflation region of the gas bag inside the gas bag covering. The pouch has an elongated, tubular shape. The pouch includes an inflation opening and an outflow opening. The outflow opening is provided with a tear seam which tears open at a predetermined internal pressure of the pouch and thereby opens the outflow opening, wherein no gas flows out of the pouch during the inflation of the pouch and before the outflow opening is open. None of the prior art disclose or suggest all of the features claimed in claim 11. Therefore, claim 11 is allowable.

Serial No. 10/637,439

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the above-identified application is in condition for allowance, and allowance of the above-identified application is respectfully requested.

Please charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees for this amendment to our Deposit Account No. 20-0090.

Respectfully submitted,



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